

M A R Y L A N D

Office of Planning and Zoning

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Gustav S. Kurtz, Jr.  
Chair, Planning Advisory Board

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February 6, 2024

The Honorable Steuart Pittman, County Executive  
Anne Arundel County  
Arundel Center, P.O. Box 2700  
Annapolis, Maryland 21404

RE: Bill 8-24 and Bill 9-24: Region 7 Plan and  
Comprehensive Zoning Map

Dear County Executive Pittman:

The Planning Advisory Board (PAB) is a citizen advisory board created by §532 of the Anne Arundel County Charter. Under § 533 (b) of the Charter, the PAB shall make advisory recommendations to the Planning and Zoning Officer and the County Council relating to various matters including Master Plans.

The PAB met on October 19, 2023 and received a briefing on the draft of the Region 7 Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Map from the Office of Planning and Zoning (OPZ). The briefing summarized the Region 7 Plan and planning process in the following parts:

- The role of the Region 7 Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) in the region planning process as well as their recommendations.
- Community engagement process, including interviews with stakeholders, online questionnaires, public forums, participation in community events, and mailings to all property owners in the Region.
- Themes of feedback from public engagement, including concerns about development pressures, impacts on environmental features, lack of housing diversity, park and recreation facilities, mobility and congestion, and underutilized commercial areas in the Region.
- Review of the Region 7 vision statement and key strategies recommended in the draft Plan.
- An overview of the Comprehensive Zoning process and recommendations.

After the staff presentation of the draft Region 7 Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Map on October 19, the PAB opened the public hearing. Twenty members of the public provided oral testimony at the meeting. The PAB also accepted written testimony from October 19 through October 26, 2023, during which 232 letters and email messages were received.

The PAB deliberated about the draft Region 7 Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Map during a public meeting on November 2, 2023. The PAB generally made zoning recommendations with the intention of protecting environmentally sensitive resources, addressing commercial impacts on residential communities, and promoting smart growth objectives. The PAB voted unanimously 6-0 to recommend approval of the Region 7 Plan with Development Policy Area, Development Policy Area Overlay, and Planned Land Use changes as recommended by OPZ and/or the Region 7 SAC with the exception of any PAB recommendations that differed.

#### **General PAB Recommendations for the Region 7 Plan:**

1. DPAO-R7-GRA-101 at Ridgely Avenue spanning from Bestgate Road North to Riverview Avenue: OPZ and the SAC recommend a Village Center Development Policy Area Overlay and sector planning process for this area. The PAB recommends not applying the Development Policy Area Overlay after hearing community input in opposition to the overlay.
2. Weems Creek / Ridgely Avenue Sector Plan: The PAB recommends the County pursue a Village Sector Plan from Bestgate Road North to Riverview Avenue to consider community development including sidewalks, traffic, environmental concerns, and the Water and Sewer Master Plan. The PAB recommends the community be included in the planning process, and that there be clear and open communication with the public throughout the process.
3. Development Policy Area Overlays: The PAB encourages that the purpose, implications, and implementation of Development Policy Area Overlays be clarified.
4. Housing: The PAB acknowledges that there is a lack of affordable housing, and housing in general in Anne Arundel County, to meet the anticipated future needs of the County.
5. Workforce Housing and Affordable Housing: The PAB requests recommendations for Workforce Housing and Affordable Housing be clarified as these are defined differently by the County and have different purposes, intents, and implications.
6. SB Zoning Reform: The PAB encourages the County Executive to consider comprehensive revisions to the Zoning Code regarding the SB zoning district to make it more effective as a transition between commercial and residential areas as intended.

The PAB also voted unanimously 6-0 to recommend approval of the Region 7 Comprehensive Zoning Map changes as recommended by OPZ and/or the SAC with the exception of any PAB zoning recommendations that differed.

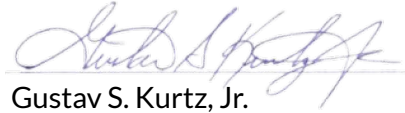
#### **The PAB provided the following specific recommendations that differ from OPZ regarding the draft Comprehensive Zoning Map:**

1. CZ-R7-ANK-001 at Annapolis Roads Open Space: OPZ recommends OS. The SAC and PAB recommend R2 zoning after hearing input from the community supporting retaining the current R2 zoning. The PAB did not provide a recommendation on the Planned Land Use for this site.

The PAB appreciates the opportunity to provide you with its recommendations on the Region 7 Plan.

If there are any questions regarding these comments, please contact Michael Stringer in the Office of Planning and Zoning, [pzstri20@aacounty.org](mailto:pzstri20@aacounty.org).

Sincerely,



Gustav S. Kurtz, Jr.  
Chair

CC: Christine Anderson, Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive  
Janssen Evelyn, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive  
Laura Corby, Administrative Officer, Anne Arundel County Council  
Members of the Planning Advisory Board  
Jenny Jarkowski, Planning and Zoning Officer, Office of Planning and Zoning (OPZ)  
Christina Pompa, Deputy Planning and Zoning Officer, Planning Division, OPZ  
Cindy Carrier, Planning Administrator, Long Range Planning Section, OPZ  
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